



Department of
Toxic Substances
Control

*Preventing
environmental
damage from
hazardous waste,
and restoring
contaminated
sites for all
Californians.*



State of California



California
Environmental
Protection Agency

Fact Sheet, September 2008

Cleanup Plan for Proposed Valley Region Blythe ES Addition Available for Review

A draft plan to remove contaminated soil at the **proposed Valley Region Blythe Elementary School Addition** site is available for public review and comment. Arsenic was found in the soil above acceptable levels at the site which is located at 18730 Blythe Street in Reseda. The draft plan, called a Removal Action Workplan, or RAW, was submitted by the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) for review and approval by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC).

Why Cleanup Is Necessary

There is no immediate health risk because the public is not exposed to the contaminated soil, since the arsenic is located underground beneath asphalt. Long-term exposure, however, to elevated levels of arsenic contamination can cause adverse health effects. In order to protect future students and staff of the new school, the DTSC recommended that the school district prepare a cleanup plan to remove and dispose of the contaminated soil. DTSC will oversee the cleanup that will take place prior to construction of the new school and will ensure that it is performed in a manner that does not harm people or the environment.

The source of arsenic is believed to be from arsenical herbicides historically used at agricultural properties on the site.

This Fact Sheet provides a brief summary of:

- Why Cleanup Is Necessary
- History and Operations at the Site
- Environmental Investigations
- Proposed Cleanup Options
- Safety & Dust Control During Cleanup
- Proposed Transportation Route for Trucks
- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
- Next Steps
- Where to Find the Documents
- Who to Contact for Information

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

September 8 – September 22, 2008

The draft RAW and other related project documents for this school site are available for review and public comment at the locations listed on page 3. The DTSC will make a final decision on the draft RAW after all public comments have been reviewed and considered. Please submit written comments in the enclosed postage paid envelope postmarked **by September 22, 2008**; or by email before the deadline date no later than 5 p.m. to:

Jeanne Matsumoto, Public Participation Specialist
5796 Corporate Avenue, Cypress, CA 90630
jmatsumo@dtsc.ca.gov

Si desea información en español, comuníquese con Jeanne Garcia al (818) 717-6573



History and Operations at the Site

The proposed site is a 1.3-acre area on the existing Blythe Elementary School campus (*see map on page 4*). While the site was occupied by Blythe Elementary School, it housed a portable building, horticultural area, and storage shed. The existing Blythe Elementary School and John R. Wooden Continuation High School occupy a city block north of Elkwood Street, south of Blythe Street, west of Yolanda Avenue and east of Geyser Avenue, in Reseda. The proposed new building addition will be within the boundaries of Blythe Elementary School. The Site is bordered by Blythe Elementary School to the north and east, residences west, and by John R. Wooden Continuation High School to the south. Historical uses at the site include agricultural lands and the elementary school. Prior to development as a school, the proposed site was historically used for agriculture. The source of arsenic is believed to be from herbicides historically used in agricultural practices at the site.

Environmental Investigations

Several site investigations have been conducted since 2007. The investigations found elevated levels of arsenic in shallow soil that require cleanup. During the investigations, elevated levels of arsenic were detected at depths up to approximately one foot below ground surface at three areas and up to three feet below ground surface at two other areas of the Site, for a total of five areas. Based on the results and recommendations of the investigations, DTSC has determined that cleanup is required at these five locations.

Proposed Cleanup Options

The following four cleanup options were considered for this site:

Alternative 1 – No Action

Alternative 2 – Treatment

Alternative 3 – Institutional Controls and On-site Containment (Capping)

Alternative 4 – Excavation and Off-site Disposal

Based on careful analysis, Alternative 4, Excavation and Offsite Disposal is

recommended because it is protective of human health and the environment, is permanent, and has a reasonable cost. If this alternative is approved, an estimated 543 cubic yards (815 tons) of soil contaminated with arsenic will be removed. Backfilling of the excavations is not anticipated since the proposed excavations are shallow and school construction will commence after DTSC certifies successful completion of the removal action. In the interim, sidewalls may be pushed or the excavations covered with plywood and secured for safety reasons. Due to the nearby location of Blythe Elementary School and John R. Wooden Continuation High School, the proposed excavation activities are planned to take place after school hours, evenings or on weekends. The cleanup is expected to begin in the fall of 2008 and will take three to four days to complete.

Safety & Dust Control During Cleanup

The following actions will be implemented during this process to ensure public safety and minimize dust:

- Installing temporary fencing with windscreens for security and dust control
- Driving all vehicles at slow speeds while on the property and streets
- Spraying of work areas with clean water to control dust
- Securing trucks with covers before they leave the site
- Brushing tires of trucks entering and exiting the site to remove soils and debris
- Monitoring the air at the site to ensure the amount of dust stays at safe levels

Proposed Transportation Route for Trucks

During the RAW, about 37 truckloads will be used to remove the contaminated soil from the site. To minimize potential impacts on the local neighborhood, trucks will exit the site by traveling east on Blythe Street, turning left on Yolanda Avenue, turning right on Strathern Street, turning right onto Reseda

Boulevard, turning left on Burbank Boulevard and then taking the 101-freeway South. The soil will be lawfully transported to a State-approved disposal facility.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

In compliance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), DTSC has prepared a draft Notice of Exemption (NOE) for this project. The NOE states that the proposed cleanup will not have a significant negative effect on human health and the environment. This is due to the removal's short duration, its relatively small amount of contaminated soil to be removed, the controlled way in which the contaminated soils will be dug out, loaded onto trucks and taken away to an approved/permitted facility for lawful disposal.

Next Steps

At the close of the public comment period, DTSC will review and consider all public comments and make any necessary revisions to the draft RAW prior to final approval. A Response to Comments document will be mailed to anyone who makes a comment and provides their name and address. After the cleanup process is completed, LAUSD will conduct confirmation soil sampling to verify cleanup goals have been met and submit a Removal Action Completion Report (RACR) to the DTSC for review and approval.

Where to Find the Documents

The Draft RAW and other related documents for the proposed Valley Region Blythe Elementary School Addition site are available for review at the following locations:

Blythe Elementary School

Main Office
18730 Blythe Street
Reseda, CA 91335
Phone: (818) 345-4066

Reseda Elementary School

Main Office
7265 Amigo Avenue
Reseda, CA 91335
Phone: (818) 343-1312

West Valley Regional Library

Reference Desk
19036 Vanowen Street, Reseda, CA 91335
Phone: (818) 345-9806
Hours: Mon. – Thu.: 10a.m. – 8 p.m.
Fri. – Sat.: 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Sun.: 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.

Los Angeles Unified School District

Office of Environmental Health and Safety
1055 W. 7th Street, 9th Floor, LA, CA 90017
Contact: Andrew Fowler, (213) 893-7418
Hours: 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Monday – Friday

Site documents are also available online at the LAUSD web site: www.laschools.org/find-a-school

Department of Toxic Substances Control

Regional Records Office
5796 Corporate Avenue, Cypress, CA 90630
Contact: (714) 484-5337, Julie Johnson for appointment
Hours: 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Monday – Friday

Site documents are also available at www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov for your review. A computer is available in the DTSC file room for your use.

Who to Contact for Information

If you have any questions about the project or cleanup activities, please contact:

Ivy Guaño, DTSC Project Manager
(714) 484-5433
iguano@dtsc.ca.gov

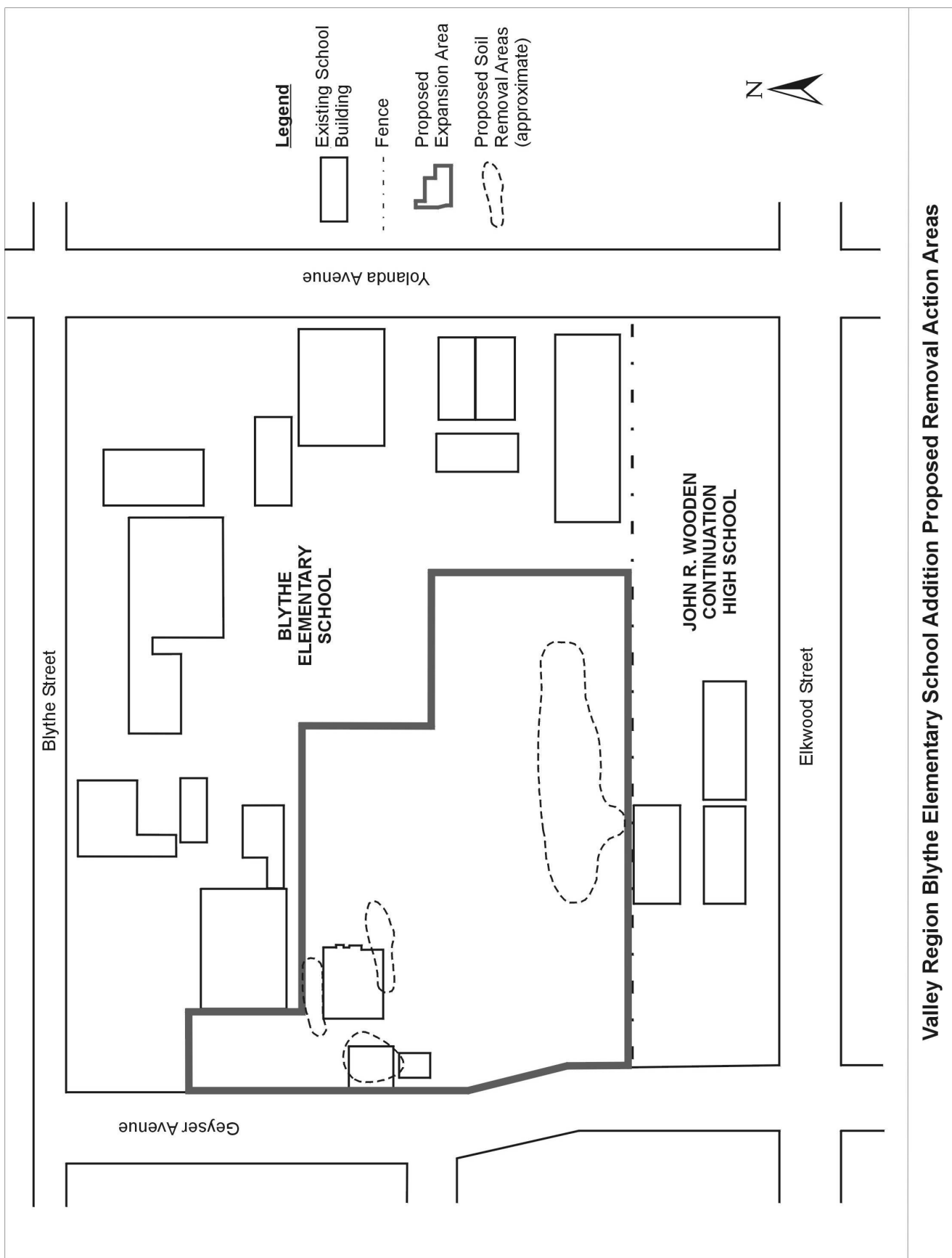
Jeanne Matsumoto
DTSC Public Participation Specialist
(714) 484-5338 or toll free 1-866-495-5651
jmatsumo@dtsc.ca.gov

Media Inquiries:

Jeanne Garcia
DTSC Public Information Officer
(818) 717-6573
jgarcia1@dtsc.ca.gov

Notice to Hearing-Impaired Individuals

You can obtain additional information about the site by using the California State Relay Service at 1 (888) 877-5378 (TDD). Ask them to contact Jeanne Matsumoto at (714) 484-5338 regarding the project.



Valley Region Blythe Elementary School Addition Proposed Removal Action Areas

DTSC is part of the California Environmental Protection Agency. DTSC oversees soil and groundwater investigations at proposed new or expanding school sites, and evaluates property for potential hazardous materials or contamination that may pose a risk to school children, the staff or faculty.